

Dear Town Meeting Members,

I am writing today on behalf of the members of the Envision Arlington Diversity Task Group to express our unequivocal support for the formation of a Civilian Police Advisory Board (CPAB) **as originally proposed** by the CPAB Study Committee.

We deeply appreciate the rigorous efforts of the Study Committee to 1) research solutions adopted by comparable communities, and 2) to solicit feedback from a diverse group of Arlington's community members. The Study Committee, experts, and other communities have found that alternative mechanisms for feedback to police and law enforcement both improve outcomes for people with marginalized identities and help police departments better serve their communities. The Study Committee's resulting clear recommendation is to form a Civilian Police Advisory Board to provide a channel for building trust between Arlington community members and the police and to provide a safe space for community members to lodge complaints and have them addressed.

The Diversity Task Group also wishes to express our deep concern about the change made by the Select Board permitting the appointment of retired police and/or law enforcement personnel to the CPAB. With this change, the Select Board is rejecting the PCAB Study Committee's recommended decision prohibiting the appointment of retired and/or law enforcement personnel to the CPAB. We believe that the Select Board's change to the CPAB Study Committee's recommendation fundamentally compromises the principal goal that Town Meeting, the Select Board and the Arlington Police Department are seeking to meet: namely, *"the creation of alternative mechanisms for civilians to file complaints regarding police interactions."*¹ Our concern concurs with DEI Director Jillian Harvey's statement made during the February 23rd Select Board discussion of the CPAB warrant article that "... because the purpose of this commission is to really start to foster trust and re-building relationships that I don't think it's appropriate. . . I don't think for the commission starting out that it would be a good fit to have a member of law enforcement on the commission."

The Diversity Task Group also respectfully submits the following recommendations for consideration by the CPAB:

1. That strong and intentional efforts be made to identify and engage potential appointees who are often underrepresented and not included so as to reflect the diversity of Arlington's residents, including race, ethnicity, color, religious views, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, citizenship, age, ancestry, family / marital status, sexual orientation, disability, source of income, housing tenure, military status and other forms of diversity.
2. That appointee trainings be expanded to specifically include trainings on racial equity, cultural humility, implicit bias, and the significance of language access;
3. That all appointees regularly and consistently report back to their nominating bodies/committees as well as communicate as part of regular business to the CPAB on behalf of their committees.

The Diversity Task Group believes the formation of a Civilian Police Advisory Board as originally proposed by the CPAB Study Committee is a strong and tangible commitment by the Town of Arlington to move towards the more equitable, socially just and peaceful society that we all envision.

Respectfully,

Rebecca Gruber, on behalf of Envision Arlington Diversity Task Group
Chair of the Diversity Task Group

¹*Civilian Police Advisory Board Study Committee, Section II, Committee Charge and Reporting*